

9 Trade G. B. Vol. 12.

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L E T T E R

T O T H E

AUTHORS of the MONTHLY REVIEW;

Occasioned by their REMARKS

On two PAMPHLETS lately published;

One Entitled,

THOUGHTS on several interesting Subjects, viz:

On the Exportation of, and Bounty upon CORN.

On the high Price of PROVISIONS.

On MANUFACTURES, COMMERCE, &c.

The Other,

A DEFENCE of the above PAMPHLET:

B E I N G

A REPLY to the APPENDIX annexed, to the Expediency of a free Exportation of CORN at this Time:

I N W H I C H

The Misrepresentations, False Reasoning, and Wilful Deceit of the Author, are fully exposed and refuted.

In TWO LETTERS to a FRIEND.

By Mr. WIMPEY.

L O N D O N :

Sold by S. CROWDER, in *Pater-noster Row*; and J. WILLIS,
Bookseller at *Newbury*. 1771.

1 Jan. 1771

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TO THE

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Ordered by their Remarks

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A Defence of the said Pamphlets:

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IN WHICH

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BY MR. WILKINSON.

L O N D O N

Printed by S. Crowder, in Strand near Horse and J. Whitt
Bookbinder in Avenue.



A
LETTER, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I published the two small pamphlets mentioned in the title page, I had never conceived the least hope of being taken notice of by so respectable a body as the Writers of the MONTHLY REVIEW. However, my obligations are not the less; and therefore that I may not be thought wanting in respect, for any favour bestow'd, I beg leave to make my public acknowledgments, and to present you my thanks for every favour you intended me.

B

Soon

Soon after your REVIEW for the month of August was published, I was asked if I had read your last REVIEW; I answered yes, and that I commonly allowed myself that pleasure. — “Pray” said one of my friends, “What do they mean, by saying great writers, like great talkers, are very liable to inconsistencies, and to be detected by any who think it worth their attention to watch their progress?” — We never knew you had published any thing before, therefore cannot see with what propriety you are called a great writer. I answered, I never did publish any thing but once before, and that was many years since, and therefore I could not properly be said to be a great writer, either in these GENTLEMEN’S sense of the words, or indeed in any other: but that it was plain to me, as I did not doubt but it would to them, upon another reading, that those words were not intended to be applied to me, but to Mr. Y. I would say ‘Squire Y. who, I thought, as well entitled to the epithet as any man living; if greatness in a writer is to be estimated

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ted *merely* by the multiplicity and unreasonable length of his books. If so, they said, it was plain the REVIEWERS did not intend me any great compliment in the words following, "that any might have detected him," &c. I answered, whether they did intend me a compliment or not, their remark exactly quadrated with mine; for his inconsistencies are so many and so glaring, that his book must be read with great inattention for them not to be observed by any reader whatever.—But, said one of them, what follows, shews you much more civility than I expected: But pray, said he, (putting the top of the fore-finger of one hand into the palm of the other, and looking archly) did you not come here? I told him I had not the pleasure of being acquainted with any one interested in that work: That I had not the least foundation to charge them with any indirect practices; and that I was not under the least temptation to wish to avail myself of any such; but that I looked upon the question in dispute to be as important and interesting as any

one in the whole circle of commerce; that in writing I had no view either to profit or vanity; that my sole aim was to serve the cause of TRUTH, and the PUBLIC; that I had never known the cause of either receive any advantage from bribery or corruption; though I was apprehensive they had too frequently, and too successfully been employed against both. That I had no attachment to any opinion, further than it appeared to me to be consistent with FACTS and TRUTH; and that I should be much obliged to the REVIEWERS, or any other person, who would help me to correct any mistakes I had made respecting the subject; and that I could not help being concerned that those GENTLEMEN went no further, than that "they thought my opinion might admit of some strictures." This, indeed, seemed as if they thought my opinion was not well established; but does not afford me an opportunity of profiting by the remark, nor of removing any objection to it. This conversation was ended with a wish, that the Authors of
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the REVIEW had been more explicit, and had plainly declared their opinion of the controversy.

In your REVIEW for November, p 4co, after having quoted the title of my second pamphlet, you make the following observations: "Mr. W. has again taken
 " up his hostile quill against Mr. Young,
 " and deals his argumentative strokes
 " about him very severely; taxing his
 " opponent with random dogmatical assertions, false reasonings, and intentional misrepresentations," &c. — In answer to which I beg leave to say, that how severe soever my *Defence* may be thought, I never meant or intended to do my opponent the least injustice; and I am not in the least conscious that I have; but if you, GENTLEMEN, think otherwise, and will be kind enough to point out the particulars, I shall be very willing to make him all the reparation in my power. On the other hand, if I have advanced nothing against him but what is strictly consistent with TRUTH, then I hope the severity I am charged with,

with, does not amount to any thing criminal or unwarrantable.

“ As to the general question respecting
 “ the bounty (you say) we shall only offer
 “ one remark to Mr. W.’s consideration.
 “ It may be granted to him, that if we
 “ fix on any assigned quantity of corn,
 “ supposed to be at any one time in the
 “ kingdom, the sending part of that pre-
 “ sent quantity abroad, undoubtedly will
 “ not tend to reduce the price of the re-
 “ mainder on hand.”

I am obliged to you, GENTLEMEN,
 for this frank, this candid acknowledg-
 ment; and confess I should be ashamed
 that I had said so much in defence of a
 truth that is in itself so clear, that, as
 you say, *it cannot be doubted*, had not my
 opponent so roundly asserted, and obsti-
 nately maintained, that the price of corn
 was ever low in proportion to the quan-
 tities exported; even in those very years
 that the largest quantities were sent
 abroad: so that with him a low price is
 the necessary and immediate effect of a
 large

large exportation; of the folly and unreasonableness of which, I think, there has been already too much said to admit of more.

“ But (you say) this is too confined a view of the subject:” I readily grant it, and beg leave to appeal again to your candour, if I have by any means, or in any sense, confined my considerations to such a narrow view. I flatter myself I have considered the subject in every view, and in every period, from the earliest times we have any account concerning it, down to the present; and I am sure, to the best of my knowledge and belief, have fairly and truly stated the FACTS; and I believe the conclusions drawn from thence are just, and will bear the strictest examination; but if I am mistaken in the FACTS, or my OBSERVATIONS upon them, I shall esteem any endeavour to set me right, as a great favour.— But you observe, “ The true state of the question is, Has not the encouragement of exportation tended to increase the annual produce of grain, “ by

“by promoting, extending, and improv-
 “ing agriculture?” I think I have clear-
 ly and fully shewn it has not: but sup-
 pose it has; there then will arise another
 true question, upon which the whole
 will then depend; that is, If we admit
 the encouragement given to exportation
 has tended to promote; extend and im-
 prove agriculture, then the next true
 question is, Whether such extension and
 promotion of agriculture has produced a
 quantity of corn equivalent and sufficient
 to answer the extra demand occasioned
 by the bounty? If it has, the dispute,
 so far as it respects the price of corn
 merely, is at an end: for let the demand
 increase in any ratio you please, if the
 supplies increase in the same proportion,
 I readily admit there can be no reason
 for any advance of price. Thus have
 we brought this much agitated affair
 into a very narrow compass, which I
 think may be very satisfactorily deter-
 mined by a few well known FACTS.
 I do not consider myself now, as dispu-
 ting with 'Squire Y. but as reasoning
 with men of candour and ingenuity,
 who

who has no bias to warp them from the cause of TRUTH; nor do I think so of any man, 'till he will not suffer me to think otherwise.

The FACTS referred to, Sirs, are as follows—

1. 'Tis an undoubted fact, that exportation is never carried to so great an height as when corn is very plenty, and consequently cheap.

2. That the first unfavourable or unfruitful year that follows such large exports, inevitably advances the price 50, 60, and sometimes 100 *per cent*.

3. That the LEGISLATURE, in such an emergency, has always thought it expedient and fit, to prohibit, for a certain time, all exportation, even without a bounty.

4. That the LEGISLATURE, in cases of great exigence, hath not only prohibited all exportation, but hath opened

our PORTS, and given free permission for importation.

5. That exportation has been so far carried beyond its due bounds, by the bounty, that what has been exported one year, with a bounty of 20 *per cent.* we have sometimes been obliged to buy again the next, at an advance of 100 *per cent.*

6. That these occurrences hath not only happened once, as if by chance, but from the commencement of the bounty to the present time, scarcity and high prices has regularly and constantly followed a large and extensive exportation, as certain effects from an infallible cause; though they have been sometimes longer, according as the following seasons proved, e'er they were felt or perceived.

I believe these are FACTS that no candid, impartial man will deny; and to all such I most readily appeal, if it does not, from the consideration of these
FACTS,

FACTS, most evidently appear, that exportation, by means of the bounty, has been carried to an impolitic and most injurious length. For had the produce from the extension and improvement of agriculture: (let such extension and improvement be encouraged and promoted by what means you please) I say, had the produce as much exceeded the usual quantity, as was equal to the export occasioned by the bounty; the scarcity and high price that followed, and the necessity of prohibiting exportation, of opening the ports, and permitting foreigners to import, and of buying in corn again at a most unreasonable advance, could never have happened. I do not mean to say, that if there was no bounty the price of corn would be invariably the same; 'tis impossible, in the nature of things, that should ever be the case; the mighty difference there is between favourable and unfavourable seasons, will render every means ineffectual to that purpose; but 'tis very clear, when there is no bounty, the

price will ever be more regular and equable. Let us suppose the price of corn very low, and government pays in any one year £. 300,000 for bounty; that, in a year or two after, corn is grown so scarce, that the bounty is suspended, exportation prohibited; and, lastly, the ports are opened, and corn imported and sold at double its former price. I think it will be readily allowed, that the bounty paid in such year caused so large a quantity to be exported, or it did not. If it did, then say the advocates for a bounty, this shews the usefulness of the measure in promoting a trade which brought a million and a half into the kingdom, in one year; this has a pleasing aspect, and with many may pass for demonstration. But let us suppose it had happened, that at that time no bounty had been given, and consequently, for want of a market, the corn then exported had been a year or two upon hand, what would have happened? Why, most certainly, this; the corn that was sold for a million and a half,

a half, would have been worth, in a year or two, three millions, besides a saving of three hundred thousand pounds paid for bounty, which together only makes the difference of one million eight hundred thousand pounds, to the disadvantage of this kingdom, in the exports of one year only. And to me it appears very clear, that the bounty every year causes a constant loss to this nation, in the same manner, in proportion to the price and quantity exported *. But if, to avoid this consequence, we allow the same quantity would have been exported without the aid of a bounty; (which, by the way, is a most improbable supposition) that is confessing, at least, that the £. 300,000 paid for the bounty, is wantonly and unnecessarily thrown away, without answering the least good purpose to this NATION.

If the FACTS, before mentioned, are allowed to be real and certain, (and surely they cannot be doubted, any more

* By means of the *bounty* is meant.

more than that there ever was such a thing as a bounty granted on exportation) they evidently prove, that the produce of our lands, notwithstanding the great and extensive improvements that have been made in our agriculture, hath been greatly insufficient to answer our extensive exports, and to satisfy the large demands of home consumption: This most evidently appears, by the measures the LEGISLATURE have been obliged to adopt from time to time, to prevent scarcity from becoming intolerable; such as prohibiting exportation, and opening the ports, with free permission to import.

From hence, Sirs, I think it appears most evidently certain, That “the encouragement of exportation has not tended to increase the annual produce of grain, by promoting, extending, and improving agriculture,” in any degree of proportion to our consumption and exports. And if you still continue to think it has, I should be much obliged

liged to you for the favour of your reasons. I know some fiery zealots in this cause, who, with great warmth, and little understanding, obstinately maintain, that the price of grain falls in proportion to the quantity sent abroad, and on high duties being laid on importation; and that it advances in price on exportation being prohibited, and on the ports being opened, and free liberty given to importation. But these opinions are so manifestly repugnant to the reason, experience, and common sense of mankind, that I am sure it would be lost labour to take any further notice of them.

Your next and last observation is, —
 “ Surely, Mr. W. is too well acquainted with trade, not to know that an increase of demand increases the produce and manufacture of the required commodity.” I answer, my acquaintance with trade hath made me know with more certainty another truth, which is, that an increase of demand
 in-

infallibly increases the *price*, both of produce and manufactures; but this, by the way, is a truth that is quite repugnant to the conclusions drawn by the advocates of a bounty. I allow, at the same time, an increase of demand increases the manufacture of the desired commodity; but that is by no means so certain, if at all so, with respect to produce. Should an increase of demand happen for goods made of hemp, flax, wool, cotton, silk, or any other thing, a manufacturer has nothing more to do than increase the number of his work people, or encourage those he has to work more hours; and, generally speaking, they can go on at all seasons, winter or summer, cold or hot, wet or dry; and consequently the increase, in a great measure, is reduced to a certainty; but this is not the case in regard to produce: the husbandman, generally speaking, crops his land according to the nature and circumstances of it; one sort of grain following another in succession, conformably to the mode

mode of culture he may practise. But, supposing upon any extraordinary demand, for wheat suppose, he should step out of his way, an increase of produce is by no means certain; he may till and crop his land very judiciously and carefully, and yet be sadly disappointed with respect to the increase. A melancholy proof of this we have now, as one may say, before our eyes. Last year an uncommon quantity of land was sown with wheat, and even 'till the very eve of harvest a plentiful crop was thought certain, but when they began to cut, they found it very light; and though the ears appeared large and full, upon examination it was found a great part of the corn was destroyed by the blight; and I have been assured by many people of credit, that a thresher must work hard, in some parts, to get a bushel a day; and that the produce of many acres, that looked very promising and well, was not more than from six to ten bushels to the acre. I have not the least reason to doubt the

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truth

truth of this account, for I had several fields myself that succeeded no better—Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, &c. So that it appears, if the farmer, upon any extraordinary advance of price, should be tempted to depart from his usual course, an increase in proportion is by no means certain. But you may depend the farmer feels no motives to such an alteration, but that of an extraordinary advance of price, which makes nothing for the opinion of the advocates for a bounty.

I would now proceed to shew, that the extensive improvements that have been made in agriculture, in the present century, are in no sense indebted to the bounty, but were entirely owing to other causes. But, I apprehend, I have so clearly and fully proved this in my former Letters, especially in the Preface to the last, that it admits of little, and stands in need of nothing more being said upon the subject.

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I have considered the affair of the bounty very carefully, and am thoroughly convinced it has not only been an useless measure, but a very disadvantageous one, exclusive of the very large sums paid for the same: and, from some calculations I have made, I am persuaded, could an exact account of quantities and prices be obtained, from the commencement of the bounty to the present time, it would admit of plain demonstration, that if there never had been any bounty at all, ENGLAND might have received full as much, for at most two-thirds of the quantity exported, as it has now done for the whole; the value of which, added to what has been paid for bounty, amounts to a very large sum, indeed!

I now, GENTLEMEN, beg leave to submit the whole to your further consideration; assuring you, at the same time, that I have no inclination to extend the controversy further than TRUTH may seem to require; but if you think

I have

I have mistaken the FACTS, or any where wrong in the deductions have made, I shall esteem your further Remarks as a favour done to

Your most humble Servant,

Jan. 1,
1771.

JOSEPH WIMPEY



